

Media release

11 November 2021



Western Alliance awarded \$9 million research project grant to deliver enhanced healthcare at home for older people in western Victoria

Healthcare for older people living in rural and regional western Victoria could look very different within five years, thanks to a new \$9 million research project funded through the Federal Government Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF).

Led by Western Alliance Academic Health Science Centre (Western Alliance), and in partnership with healthcare consumers, regional and rural health services, universities and primary healthcare providers across western Victoria, the project will identify and build a suite of programs to improve and extend in-home healthcare.

Federal Minister for Regional Health Dr David Gillespie said the project would help to improve health outcomes for elderly Australians in regional, rural and remote areas.

“Offering more support and health care to aging Australians in their own home means they’re able to comfortably and safely stay at home longer without the need to re-locate into a care facility,” Dr Gillespie said.

“Working initially in Western Victoria, the researchers are identifying the key challenges to providing health care at home and testing new ways to deliver part of that care virtually. They’ll find local solutions and develop a blueprint to scale it nationally.”

Project Director Professor Anna Peeters is Principal Research Translation Investigator at Western Alliance and Director of the Institute for Health Transformation at Deakin University. Prof Peeters said the awarding of the funding was timely, given the way the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on the need for healthcare in rural and regional Victoria to be able to rapidly respond to local needs.

“This research has the ability to be translated at a local level. It is being co-designed and tested across the key settings, so there is a real chance it can be implemented during the five year period,” she said.

“That means we can make a real difference in people’s lives during the five years by implementing research interventions they have contributed to and that meet their needs.”

Western Alliance Executive Director Professor Warren Payne explained that the funding will also significantly build the capacity for health and medical research across western Victoria.

OUR PARTNERS



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“This project will assist our partners to develop their capacity to undertake health and medical research that meets the needs of their communities. In this way, we are confident that the lessons learned from the research will be fully implemented to the ultimate benefit of the communities of western Victoria”.

Western Alliance thanks its project partners:

- Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
- Ballarat Health Services
- Barwon Health
- Beaufort and Skipton Health Service
- Central Highlands Rural Health
- Colac Area Health
- Consumers Health Forum of Australia
- Deakin Rural Health
- Deakin University
- East Grampians Health Service
- Edenhope and District Memorial Hospital
- Federation University Australia
- Maryborough District Health Service
- Melbourne Academic Centre for Health
- Monash Partners
- National Ageing Research Institute
- Rural Northwest Health
- South West Healthcare
- St John of God Health Care
- Stawell Regional Health
- Terang and Mortlake Health Service
- Victorian Collaborative Healthcare Recovery Initiative
- Victorian Department of Health
- West Wimmera Health Service
- Western District Health Service
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network
- Wimmera Health Care Group

About Western Alliance

Established in 2014, Western Alliance is Australia’s first rural and regionally-focused academic health science centre.

Western Alliance is a collaborative of 12 member organisations located across the Barwon/Southwest and Grampians regions of western Victoria. Members include four regional and sub-regional public health services (Ballarat Health Services, Barwon Health, South West Healthcare and Western District Health Service) two rural public hospitals (Colac Area Health and East Grampians Health Service), three private hospitals (St John of God Geelong, Warrnambool and Ballarat), the Western Victoria Primary Health Network, Deakin University and Federation University. The two regions have a combined population of more than 660,000 residents, or approximately 44 per cent of rural/regional Victoria’s population.

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Through a program of education, funding and advocacy, Western Alliance supports its members to improve the health of their communities through research-based and evidence-informed health care.

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